



Notes of PLA Harbour Master's Recreational Navigation Group (PHRNG)

Wednesday 14th March at Pinnacle House, 23-26 St Dunstan's Hill London, EC3N 8HN

Chair

Mark Towns MT Harbour Master Upper – PLA

Attendees

Darren Knight	DK	Assistant Harbour Master Upper (Recreational) - PLA
Sandra Baker	SB	Executive Assistant – PLA (Notetaker)
Jonathan Beckett	JB	SMS Manager, PLA
Banny	B	NCBA
Pam Chart	PC	ATYC
Kevin East	KE	British Canoeing
Nick Edmunds	NE	Richmond Canoe Club
Peter Finch	PF	River Thames Society
Richard Hart	RH	ATYC, DSP/RYA L&SE
Alex Hester	AH	Chelsea Kayak Club
Paul Hyman	PH	Active 360
Peter Finch	PF	RTS
Brian (Bill) Mitchell	BM	Liaison Officer TRRC
Barry Singleton	BS	DBA – The Barge Association

1. **Apologies:**

Mike Wardle, Chris Winnington-Ingram, Ray Blair, Michael Chambers, Lyn Kindlen-Funnell

2. **Minutes of last PHRNG – 31st October 2017**

Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed. (Timings for future meetings to be reduced to 2 hours)

2b **Actions from Previous Meeting(s)**

- Revised basic navigational signage for various points along the River (i.e. speed limits): In the process of being installed.
- PLA to consider if vessel speed logs could be made Public with tidal flow modelling data online - **Action Closed** (Decision not to pursue at this time)
- AHMR to discuss with the PLA Hydrographic Team about the possibility of providing tidal stream data at various points along the tidal Thames.

Action:

- PLA to identify specific locations for flow measurement control (possibly: Kew/Cremorne and Blackfriars Bridge) (noting that the value of the information is on the bends)
- Action to take place 3 hours after high water on an ebb tide spring
- Data to be shared with PHRNG Group for value, opinion and feedback
- Decision then to be made whether to upload to the webpage or add to tide table books.

- **Tide Gauge at Hammersmith Bridge** (as requested by Corinthian Sailing Club) . Currently there is a tide board at each side of the bridge (although data is not available on the App) therefore there is no plan to place a tide gauge at Hammersmith.
- **KEW Bridge Pontoon** – Scheduled for removal at the beginning of April – works due to take 3-4 weeks - Notice to Mariners will be issued. Request for 2 days notice prior to commencement of work and to avoid weekend working. Amendment will be required to the Rowing and Paddling code which will be covered later in the year when the Codes are due for review.

2c New Action Points:

Kew Bridge Planning approval has been granted to improve the step access – there is concern that if the improvements increase usage of the steps, there would be a need for further precautionary measures to be taken:

- The slope needs to be levelled out (with a nonslip surface)
- Handrail and/or 'caution' signs
- Consider using funds to install a causeway instead of step modification – which would also assist in boat launching.

It was confirmed that cleaning takes place 4 times annually (prior to Easter to before Summer season ends).

Action: DK to relay safety concerns prior to any works commencing and for further consideration/costing for a steel causeway.

2d Notice to Mariners

The PLA is currently looking at improving the search function for Notice to Mariners and by the end of May will be data testing this.

The request for the 'Effective Notice Date' to be added to the Title of the Notices was reiterated and agreed.

Action: JB to continue improvements on search function for Notices and arrange for the date to be included in the emailed title.

3. Review of Actions Arising from TTNC Pre-Season Briefing held on board Dixie Queen on 7.3.18:

3a PLA Open Day - 2nd June 2018

HML to enquire about a pontoon for visiting vessels. **Action:** HML continues to explore options.

Moorings Contact Details at Gravesend:

PLA Moorings:	Tel:	01474 562421
	Email:	VisitorMoorings@pla.co.uk
	Website:	www.boatingonthames.co.uk/
Town Pier Moorings:	Gravesham Borough Council	
		07949 750236 or 0779 8885332 (Limited space)

3b River Trips – Request for river trip details to be released earlier to assist with travel arrangements.

Due to increasing demand for TTNC river trips it was suggested that the PLA approach Tideway (who offer river trips on a clipper as part of their marketing promotion, to look at Tideway sites) as a solution to offer more members a complimentary river trip.

Action: DK/JB to further investigate option of complimentary river trips with Tideway for TTNC members.

3c AIS Guidance – PLA to consider what guidance can be provided to recreational mariners for AIS on board their vessels and post the outcome via the Forum or Website.

3d Post Meeting Addition:

HMU to consider whether there is a way of providing estimated tug arrival times at bridges.

MT to investigate what is happening at South Dock Marina:

Post Meeting Note: Plans are currently on hold, but PLA Planning team aware and have previously objected to residential development of the Boatyard – **Action Closed**

4a Visitor Mooring Meeting now: Mooring and Marina’s Operators Meeting

This combined meeting will now include operator and marina representatives together with river users. After extensive work at the PLA information of mooring availability is now more easily accessible.

As a result of discussions covering visitor mooring experiences, it was highlighted that visiting vessels are booking multiple berths in order to be assured of a booking (as a result berths are booked up and not used). With regard to visitor moorings – it was suggested that the PLA licensing clause could extend mooring opportunity beyond the nominated timeframe of Palm Sunday – 30th September in order for the moorings to become more commercially viable for developers and not impact upon people wanting to use it.

4b Tidal Thames Water Safety Forum/London & Thames Water Safety Team

This is a joint strategy project involving all the emergency services primarily focusing on ways to reduce the figures for accidental drowning/suicides in the tidal Thames. Suggestions include:

- Approaching volunteer groups for assistance (Street Pastors)
- CCTV with links to the Samaritans to step in when needed
- Precautionary netting
- Life saving equipment more readily available
- Grab chains along the river bank
- Emphasis of the responsibility of licensed premises for their patrons when accidents are drink-influenced, extends beyond the premises
- Launch Event to increase profile (poss. September 2018)
- Assistance of a Royal Patrol to raise the profile

Also of note are the problems being caused by ‘beds on board’ being rented out by squatter boats and the litter pollution being caused by illegally moored boats.

DK reported that at Kew there are problems with repeat offenders and the Met Police are gathering data to get help for these individuals (compounding the problem is the proximity of St. Thomas’ hospital, where vulnerable people are treated, to Westminster Bridge).

AH mentioned the iPhone App that advises nearest AEDs (automated external defibrillator) – London Ambulance are trying to get defibrillators in notable sites although all AEDs are not registered and it was suggested that all Class Vs carried these on board.

Action: PLA (NE) to raise awareness at next MCA Class V meetings.

5 Publications Update

5a PLA App

DK advised that the mobile phone App is being refreshed and Version 2 will be relaunched soon – comments and suggestions for improvement welcomed. JB

confirmed that the new version will have dated predicted tides and shipping movements.

NE requested water temperature information to be available on the App. (bearing in mind that depth of water will have an impact) for safety of kayakers during the winter season. **Action** DK to make enquiries (although acknowledge that the PLA prefer to use their own data to upload on the App rather than from external sources such as EA).

5b Coach SKILLS Initiative

The new posters display reminders for rowing coaches highlighting key safety elements: Steer Accreditation, Kill cords, ID Codes, Life Jackets, Lights and Group Size. For copies please contact Darren Knight.

Action: DK to forward electronic copy to Paul Hyman.

Reminder also to encourage coaches/coxswains to carry mobile phones in waterproof cases and request for Rowing Phrases: 'Look Ahead' and 'Take a Look' to be added to the next River Users Guide and when re-published to be forwarded to the Canoe Clubs.

Action: JB to include in next publication of River Users Guide.

5c Red Tape Challenge

This is ongoing to update/concentrate all the general directions and byelaws ultimately producing a Port Information Guide. The next step will be to liaise with those directly affected by the changes and in the summer, will be consulting informally and publically. Also part of the Red Tape Challenge now will be to remove duplicity and will be looking to amalgamate both the Rowing and the Paddling Code.

6. Events

The Events List was circulated in advance of the meeting.

Please note:

- The onus is on the organisers to arrange rubbish removal at events;
- Regarding invasive species, information from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs should be forwarded to events organisers.

7. Review of Incident Report, Incorporating; Ebb Tide flag Stats and Safety Bulletins

Reminder for all to check the ebb tide warning status (including motorboat users). Data dictates that most incidents occur on "Black Flag days" and the key message to all is to refer to the 2014 Safety Bulletin and complete simple checks before going afloat.

Breakdowns – focus will soon be aimed at attempting to reduce the number of mechanical breakdowns - this will include advice of the top '5' breakdowns with tips on what to do. Whilst many breakdowns are human error, 47% are caused by river debris, in particular marine litter - ropes.

Good, simple, passage planning applies to all vessels.

Ebb Tide Flag Stats:	As circulated
Safety Bulletins:	None this period
Flares:	There are now a number of electronic flares available
Life Jackets:	Reiterate message that lifejackets need to be serviced. (The RNLI will be providing a lifejacket clinic at the PLA Open Day in June) RH reported that at a recent check over 60% of lifejackets were rendered 'useless'.

8. River Works

8a Central/Navigational Channel Arch Closures at

- I. Hammersmith Bridge – works to commence later this year

- II. Thames Bridge (Limehouse) – The TfL consultation which ran just before Christmas looked at a bridge connecting Rotherhithe with Canary Wharf. Works on design will soon commence by TFL (together with the PLA) for which there will be further consultation. There is value in a high level bridge that opens less frequently and consideration will be given to accommodate up to 45ft yachts without the need to lift. The challenge will also be to accommodate cyclists by not being too steep.
- III. Nine Elms Footbridge – This is slowly progressing with meetings being undertaken with the design team - the preferred location is near 9 Elms Pier, linking in with developments for Tideway Tunnel.

8b Fulham Football Club

The stand that was designed in 2014 was not considered by the owners to be of an acceptable architectural design and has therefore been redesigned with assessments to consider wind impact and 'gustyness'. Another consideration for the new design which incorporates flats will be the lighting that the flats will create.

Action: MT to note.

8c Thames Tideway Tunnel

Broadly on track for completion on original date. Tunnel boring will commence in the summer which will increase river barge traffic with measures already in place.

Tideway Contact Details: 24-Hr Helpdesk: 08000 308080. www.tideway.london

8d Illuminated Bridge Project

Project is still progressing to light up the bridges in London which the PLA are keen to support, although there are still issues of navigation to deal with. This will be a staged project with Central London a priority for Stage 1.

9 Any Other Business

There is currently a project in conjunction with Thames 21 to replace plastic pint glasses with more environmentally friendly reusable holders, that can be branded and will be sold by licenced premises under a deposit scheme. This will hopefully assist in reducing the amount of plastic thrown into the river by patrons of licensed premises and will be launched this Summer.

2-Minute Beach Clean

A suggestion has been put forward to trial a 2-Minute Beach Clean at Richmond Lock – encouraging people on the foreshore to each take 2 minutes to 'litter pick' and the Environment Team are currently liaising with the Council on disposal of the litter collection. Once developed this could be extended further along the River.

Further work is needed to put weight on the Councils to dispose of riverside rubbish as a preventative measure or proposing the issue of fines for deposits of rubbish 'outside' of the bins (when they are overflowing as at Richmond last year) and stickers to advise people of the fines.

Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 31st October @ 10.00 a.m. (followed by lunch). Outlook calendar invitation to follow.